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**THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH URGES TEENS TO TAKE  
THE NATIONAL PREVENT TEEN PREGNANCY QUIZ**

*May is National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month*

(Richmond, Va.)—The Virginia Department of Health is urging teenagers to go online and take a fun, engaging quiz that focuses on the importance of avoiding pregnancy and other consequences of sexual activity.

The quiz, which is sponsored by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, presents teenagers with six real life scenarios involving sex and asks them to choose a course of action. The quiz is appropriate for teenagers 13 and older and can be found on the Web at [www.teenpregnancy.org](http://www.teenpregnancy.org). It will be available throughout the month of May.

According to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, the number one reason teenagers give for not using protection is that they weren't planning to have sex and that it "just happened." The online quiz is designed to help teens come up with their plans for avoiding pregnancy.

"The Virginia Department of Health is committed to reducing the rate of pregnancy among teenagers in the Commonwealth," said State Health Commissioner Robert B. Stroube, M.D., M.P.H. The teen pregnancy rate in the state has dropped 29 percent since 1993 according to statistics from the Virginia Department of Health's Center for Health Statistics.

While the state's teen pregnancy rate dropped to 27.6 per 1,000 females aged 10-19 in 2002, "teenage pregnancy remains a significant public health problem," said Gale Grant, manager of the Virginia Department of Health's Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative. "In 2002, there were 13,586 pregnancies to teenage girls in Virginia. That represents nine percent of all births in the state that year. Eleven percent of those babies had a low birth weight, which put them at risk for severe health problems."

The Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative has concentrated its resources in areas of greatest need by providing grant funds to seven local health districts that have the highest teen pregnancy rates in the state. The districts and their rates for 2002 include Alexandria, 55.5; Crater, in the Petersburg area, 45.7; Eastern Shore, 42.2; Norfolk, 58.5; Portsmouth, 54.1; Richmond, 65.1 and Roanoke, 54.5. The rate in each district declined between 1994 and 2002 by an average of 17 percent.

The districts provide programs that teach pregnancy prevention curricula in schools and in after school settings. They also conduct a variety of community education activities for teens including workshops and conferences. "Their goal is to arm teens with information and education that will get them to stop, think and take positive steps to avoid pregnancy," said Grant. "Tools like the pregnancy prevention quiz can prepare teens to think critically about the consequences of having sex."

The campaign's national partners include the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association and the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials.

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